JONATHAN HICKMAN
RICK MAGYAR

MARVEL NOW!

STEVE EPTING
FRANK D'ARMATA

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PREVIOUSLY IN NEW AVENGERS

WE HAVE A PLAN. THE INFINITY GEMS. WE MEAN TO USE THEM TO RE-FORM THE INFINITY GAUNTLET.

THIS IS A GOOD PLAN.

THE STONES WILL NOT WORK OUTSIDE THEIR NATIVE UNIVERSE, SO THEY HAVE LIMITATIONS.

BUT THE STONES WILL BUY YOU TIME.

THEN IT WILL BE ENOUGH.

"SEE IF YOU FEEL THAT WAY WHEN YOUR TIME RUNS OUT."

THE OTHER EARTH SHOULD HAVE ITS OWN SET OF INFINITY GEMS. MAYBE WE USE THEM TO TRY TO BUY OURSELVES A WHILE LONGER.

THE GEMS ONLY WORK IN THEIR NATIVE UNIVERSE. THEREFORE, THEY WOULD HAVE TO BE USED FROM THAT SIDE.

MEANING SOMEONE WOULD HAVE TO STAY THERE.

YOU ARE TOO LATE. I AM TERRAX, THE TRULY ENLIGHTENED. MY MASTER, GALAKTUS, IS A UNIVERSAL CONSTANT. HE MUST BE THERE AT THE END OF EACH UNIVERSE. BUT THE UNIVERSES ARE DYING TOO SOON.

SO WE WILL UNMOOR OUR UNIVERSE BY KILLING THIS WORLD. PLEASE, GO HOME. ACCEPT THE GREATER GOOD--ACCEPT YOUR GOOD FORTUNE--AND LET THIS EARTH DIE...

...OR WE COULD PLAY WARRIORS WHILE A WORLD CRUMBLES AROUND US...PRETENDING THIS IS SOMETHING YOU CAN DEFEAT WITH YOUR FISTS.

THE ILLUMINATI

BLACK BOLT
Celestial Messiah

NAMOR
Imperius Rex

REED RICHARDS
Universal Builder

IRON MAN
Master of Machines

BEAST
Mutant Genius

DOCTOR STRANGE
Sorcerer Supreme

BLACK PANTHER
King of the Dead

“BLACK SWANS”

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NECROPOLIS.

SO YOU'RE FINALLY READY TO HEAR *REAL* ANSWERS...

GOOD.

ONE CAN ONLY BE IN TOTAL DARKNESS FOR SO LONG BEFORE PANIC SETS IN.

THIS IS A TRUTH--TRUE EVEN FOR THOSE WHO DARE TO LIVE THEIR LIVES IN THE SHADOWS.

BUT DO NOT COME TO ME LIKE THIS, A KEEPER TO HIS CAPTIVE.

IF YOU WANT MY HELP, YOU HAVE TO ASK ME PROPERLY.

OR NOT AT ALL.

I DO WANT YOUR HELP.

I HAVE NO EGO ABOUT THESE THINGS, AND I HAVE NO TROUBLE ASKING...

MY CONCERN IS THAT THERE'S A PRICE.

FEH! THE WHEEL CONTINUES TO TURN, *REED RICHARDS.*

THERE HAVE BEEN TWO INCURSIONS SINCE I HAVE BEEN YOUR PRISONER. WE LIVE, SO MY PRAYERS WERE HEARD AND ANSWERED.

THE GREAT SHADOW OF RABUM ALAL PASSED OVER THIS WORLD.

YOU WITNESSED THIS, BUT REFUSE TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE GIFT HE GAVE YOU.

MY PRICE...

CRACK!

...IS *LIVING...* YOU FOOLISH, FOOLISH MAN.

WELL? WHAT DO YOU THINK?

SHE'S READY.

LET HER OUT.

WARRIOR...

WE MEET AGAIN.

UH-HUH.

CRACKING THE CELL WALL WAS IMPRESSIVE. YOU'RE STRONGER THAN REED ESTIMATED...

SO WHO SITS IN A CAGE THAT DOES NOT HAVE TO?

THE TILES IN THIS FLOOR DEPRESSED WHEN I STEPPED ON THEM-- ONLY A MILLIMETER, BUT STILL... THE WALL, WHILE FORMIDABLE, WAS JUST A WALL.

THE REAL CAGE IS THE BOMB UNDERNEATH.

THAT'S CORRECT. AND THAT BOMB'S YIELD IS ROUGHLY EQUAL TO WHAT'S IN THIS NECKLACE.

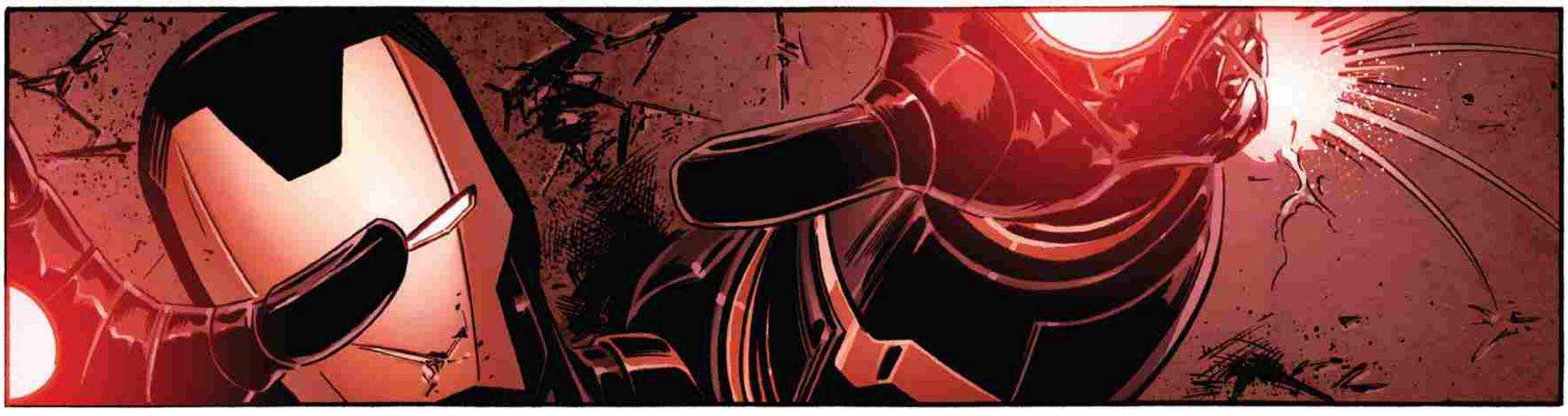
SO...BE *USEFUL*. NOT THE OTHER THING.

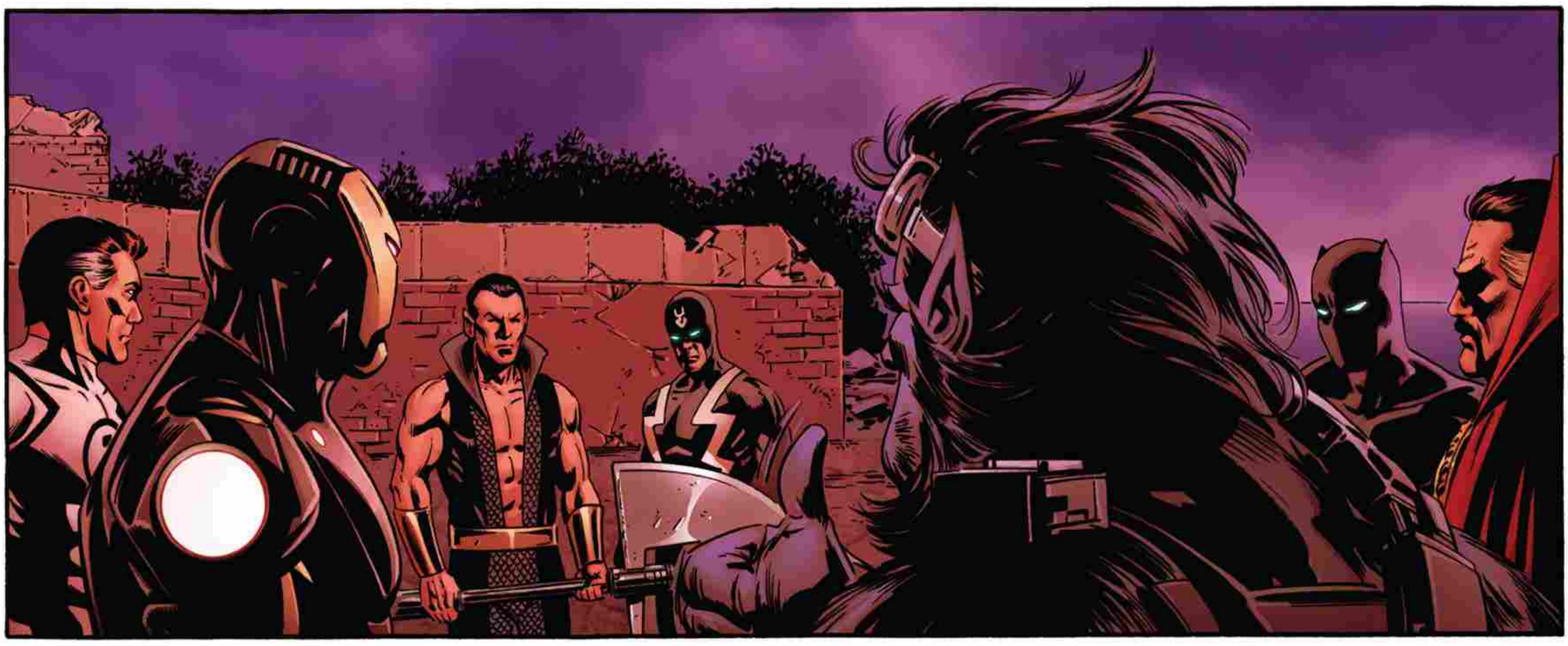
YOU THINK SOME LEASH CAN HOLD ME?

I AM NOT SOMEONE TO BE KEPT...

DO I LOOK LIKE HIM?

ONE WEEK AGO.





NOW.

SO...

WE NEED ONE ANOTHER.

OH, I THINK SOME OF US MIGHT HAVE GREATER NEEDS THAN OTHERS.

DO YOU REALLY THINK THAT?

ARE YOU HOLDING OUT HOPE THAT A SERVANT OF A WORLD EATER IS GOING TO TELL YOU HOW TO SAVE A PLANET--TO SAVE *YOUR* PLANET?

IS THAT WHY YOU BROUGHT HIM BACK WITH YOU?

MAYBE. MAYBE NOT.

EITHER WAY, YOU'RE GOING GET HOWEVER MUCH ROPE WE CHOOSE TO GIVE YOU.

THE LENGTH OF WHICH DEPENDS ENTIRELY ON HOW HELPFUL WE FIND YOU.

FAIR ENOUGH.

I KNOW YOU UNDERSTAND THE MECHANICS OF WHAT IS HAPPENING...I HAVE GIVEN YOU THAT ALREADY.

BECAUSE I AM SO VERY GIVING.

BUT YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHAT IT IS YOU'RE *ACTUALLY* DEALING WITH.

WHY DON'T YOU TELL US THEN?

WHO IS THIS MAN?

MY NAME IS STEPHEN STRANGE. A MASTER OF THE MYSTIC ARTS, AND SORCERER SUPREME OF THIS REALM.

I AM THE DOCTOR.

PTOO!

A NECROMANCER. A SUMMONER.

I WILL NOT TOLERATE THIS MAN SPEAKING TO ME.

HRMPH.

SEEMS SHE'S GOT YOU PEGGED, STEPHEN.

I LIKE HER.

WHY DON'T YOU JUST BEGIN WITH WHAT WE DON'T KNOW.

HEH. A VIRTUALLY INFINITE AMOUNT OF KNOWLEDGE IN THE MULTIVERSE AND YOU WANT TO KNOW WHAT YOU DON'T KNOW...

REMEMBER YOU AND I TALKING ABOUT TIME, AND HOW VERY LITTLE OF IT YOU HAVE?

WE'LL ADAPT AND REFOCUS AS YOU PROGRESS. FOR NOW...START AT THE BEGINNING.

AH...THE BEGINNING...

"THERE WAS *EVERYTHING.*

"FOLLOWED BY *NOTHING.*

"A SWIRLING, GAPING MAW THAT SWALLOWED LIFE-GIVING SUNS.

"AND THEN...

"WE COWERED IN THE *NIGHT.*

"I WAS FOUR WHEN WE LOST THE HEIGHTS.

"MY NAME THEN WAS YABBAT UMMON TARRU, THIRD SISTER TO THE CROWN PRINCE, DADINGRA.

"MY BROTHER WAS HEIR TO THE THRONE OF THE HIDDEN CITY, AND KEEPER OF THE GREAT KEY.

"THE KEY UNLOCKED THE CITY'S--OUR PLANET'S--GREATEST TREASURE, A LIBRARY OF WORLDS. A GIFT FROM SINNU SARRUM, THE IVORY KINGS.

"DADINGRA HAD THE KEY, AND HE COULD OPEN THE DOOR, BUT THE LIBRARY COULD NOT BE NAVIGATED BY THE UNTRAINED.

"LEGEND SAID THAT ONLY THE GREAT LADIES--WHOM NONE OF OUR PEOPLE HAD EVER SEEN--COULD FIND THEIR WAY THROUGH THE TWISTED PATHS BETWEEN WORLDS.

"STILL, EVERY DAY MY BROTHER UNLOCKED AND OPENED THE DOOR HOPING THE LADIES MIGHT APPEAR.

"HE DID THIS EVERY SINGLE DAY...

"UNTIL THE SKY TURNED *RED*.

"THE BLACK PRIESTS DESCENDED FROM THEIR EARTH TO OURS. NO ONE WAS SPARED, NO ONE ESCAPED--EXCEPT ME.

"BECAUSE I TOOK THE KEY.

"AND OPENED THE DOOR...

"AND FOUND THE GREAT LADIES WAITING FOR ME INSIDE.

"THEY SAID MY WORLD WAS AN OFFERING TO THE GREAT DESTROYER, RABUM ALAL.

"I ACCEPTED HIS MERCY FOR WHAT IT WAS, A GIFT. JUST AS I ACCEPTED MY NEW SISTERS.

"I WAS RAISED A BLACK SWAN BY BLACK SWANS."

FIRST, THEY TAUGHT ME HOW TO--

WAIT.

SWANS. THERE ARE MORE OF YOU?

OF COURSE.

AND THIS LIBRARY OF WORLDS-- IS IT SOME TYPE OF WAY STATION FOR MULTIVER--

IT IS DESTROYED NOW.

THE SWANS SCATTERED.

WELL, THAT'S TOO BAD.

BUT I THINK YOU OMITTED SOME PARTS OF YOUR STORY. QUITE A BIT. YOUR BAD FICTION SKIPPED SEVERAL BILLION YEARS, GIVE OR TAKE.

WHAT I WANT TO KNOW IS WHAT CAUSED ALL OF THIS TO HAPPEN?

I TOLD REED RICHARDS, AND THEN I ASSUME HE TOLD YOU...

THERE WAS AN EVENT. THE BIRTH OF RABUM ALAL, THE GREAT DESTROYER.

"AT HIS BIRTH, THE EARLY DEATH OF EVERYTHING BEGAN.

"SO WE OFFER HIM HIS EARTHS, AN OFFERING, THAT THE MANY MAY LIVE FOR A SEASON LONGER. WARDUM UGGAE."

THOSE ARE NOT ANSWERS. IT'S GIBBERISH.

SCARY TALES FOR FOOLISH CHILDREN. I AM NO CHILD, WOMAN, TELL ME SOMETHING REAL.

ALL I HAVE, ALL I HAVE EVER KNOWN, ARE SCARY STORIES. AND THEY ARE *ALL* REAL...

THE INCURSIONS NEVER STOP, NOT UNTIL YOUR WORLD DIES-- NOT UNTIL EVERYTHING DIES.

THIS IS ALL THERE IS.

THERE HAS TO BE SOMETHING WE CAN DO TO SAVE OUR UNIVERSE-- TO STOP THESE INCURSIONS.

STOPPING THE INCURSIONS FROM HAPPENING IS NOT DIFFICULT AT ALL.

OH?

COME NOW, REED RICHARDS...SURELY YOU'VE FIGURED THIS OUT.

SIMPLY EVACUATE THIS WORLD, AND THEN DESTROY IT COMPLETELY. IT HAS BEEN DONE MANY, MANY TIMES BEFORE.

YOU.

YOU ARE HENRY PHILIP McCOY, ARE YOU NOT?

YES.

OTHER YOUs HAVE DONE THIS BEFORE.

THE BEAST IS A NAME WELL KNOWN IN THE GREAT GAME OF WORLDS.

AND THIS WOULD SAVE OUR UNIVERSE?

YOU'RE NOT LISTENING. THERE IS NO SAVING ANYTHING.

BUT IT WILL END THE INCURSIONS. THIS IS THE EIGHTH WAY, CALLED *SHADING THE APOCALYPSE.*

IT IS A COWARDLY PATH. BUT ONE OFTEN CHOSEN.

THE EIGHTH WAY...SO THERE ARE OTHER TRICKS-- OTHER METHODS-- THINGS YOU CAN TEACH US?

YES.

THEN WE SHOULD START THERE. I THINK--

NO.

I STILL HAVE A PROBLEM WITH THIS.

WITH HER.

I KNOW YOU ARE NO COWARD, WARRIOR.

WHAT IS THIS WEAKNESS?

I WATCHED YOU KILL A WORLD.

I HAVE DONE WORSE.

YOU WILL ALL DO WORSE.

PERHAPS SOMETHING IN GOOD FAITH... SOMETHING TIMELY.

THE DEVICES YOU HAVE IMPLANTED IN YOUR PALMS--THEY ARE A GOOD START, BUT YOU WILL NEED SOMETHING MORE ACCURATE GOING FORWARD.

A DEVICE SLIGHTLY OUT OF PHASE WITH YOUR NATIVE UNIVERSE WILL ALLOW YOU TO FORECAST COMING INCURSIONS.

MINE ARE IN MY EYES.

AND YOU CAN PREDICT WHEN AN INCURSION WILL OCCUR?

I CAN.

THEN HOW LONG UNTIL THE NEXT ONE?

MINUTES.

RABUM ALAL.

DAMN.

WHERE?

TRIANGULATING... IT'S COMING UP NOW.

IT'S... OH, NO.

THE LOCATION...

WHAT'S WRONG?

WHAT IS IT?

IT'S LATVERIA.

THE ASSEMBLY!

YOUR ONE-STOP NEWS SOURCE FOR ALL THINGS AVENGERS!

So how do you follow up on the most successful super hero movie ever put to film? Well, if you're the talented crew at Marvel Studios, the answer is **IRON MAN 3**, causing a stir at your local film emporium starting May 3, 2013! We're sure you've all seen the action-packed trailer for the film by now—but, if not, point your electronic device at the poster image on this page and activate the Marvel AR App, and excitement shall be yours! If you don't have a whatchamacallit electronic device, we're afraid you'll just have hold out for a few more weeks! But trust us—it'll be worth it!

Beyond our usual releases, there's a pair of projects this month that AVENGERS fans may want to pay special attention to. Proving he's more than just a pretty face at the end of a blockbuster movie, Jason Aaron and Simone Bianchi reveal the full story of the life of Thanos the Mad Titan in **THANOS RISING**! And for those who miss writer Brian Bendis around these parts—and who doesn't?—the ongoing saga of **AGE OF ULTRON** continues this month with three additional issues—Issue #6 in particular should prove a special treat for long-time AVENGERS fans!

Hey, it's mailbag time!

Have you ever thought about having a poll to see which is the best current AVENGERS title? If so, UNCANNY AVENGERS has my vote. Coming from somebody who has been collecting comics and Avengers since they had a twelve cent cover price, I think it's better than AVENGERS, NEW AVENGERS, AVENGERS ASSEMBLE, SECRET AVENGERS, HONEY, I SHRUNK THE AVENGERS, etc. Hypothetically if I only could get one AVENGERS title a month it would be UNCANNY AVENGERS. Hypothetically if I only could get one Marvel title a month it would be HAWKEYE, but I'd be pretty ticked off at these hypothetical people/reasons limiting my Marvel purchases to just one book a month and I'd raise enough hell that the hypothetical people/reasons would let me get two Marvel titles to placate me. And the second title would be UNCANNY AVENGERS. If I could go back in time and rename my daughter, I'd rename her UNCANNY AVENGERS. (HAWKEYE is a silly name for a little girl anyway.)

If you can't tell, I'm really liking the book.

Make Mine Marvel.
Rob Shelor
Roanoke, VA

Ask and ye shall receive, Rob! So a poll it is! We're calling on all of our faithful Marvel readers to drop us a line at the e-mail address below and let us know which AVENGERS title is your favorite! And as long as we're asking, how about telling us your favorite current AVENGERS family writer, penciler, inker, letterer and colorist as well? Results to be tabulated and printed in an upcoming ASSEMBLY page!

And because we're always a sucker for letters like this one:

Dear Marvel,
A lot of people have their own opinions of a "hero," and this is mine...my fiancé Paul! He's my hero!

A year ago he was in a terrible car crash, which left him paralyzed from his waist down. This means his only way of getting around is in a wheelchair. Before the accident he was very active and always on his feet.

For as long as I have known Paul, he's been a huge fan of Marvel! I never knew anyone could have such an obsession with anything.

I was oblivious to super heroes before the accident, a bit like Penny and Leonard's relationship from "The Big Bang Theory." Paul can't do anything active and is always bored. Then about 6 months ago when I came in from work he had gotten his brother to get all his old comics out. That day was the most I had seen him smile in a long time.

We also have 2 children together, they are both super hero daft too! Obviously due to Paul's accident he can't enjoy normal father and son activities, but he loves to read them both comics.

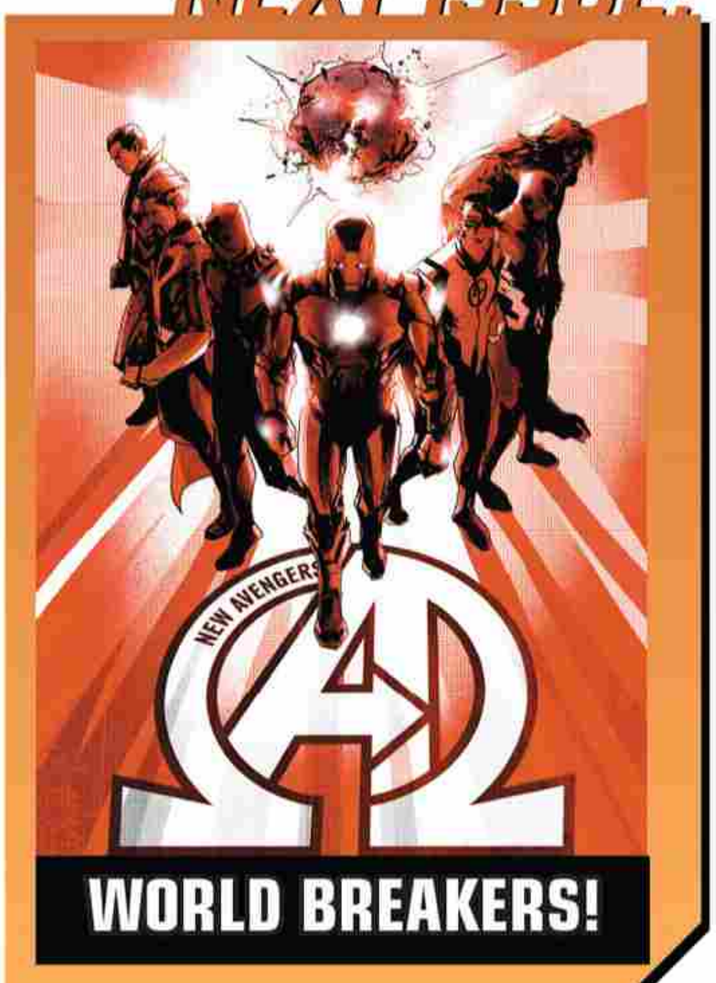
Thanks to Marvel, we have a bond like never before, as I'm now a huge fan too and we can enjoy things together. Thanks to Marvel. I now see a smile on my fiancé's face every day. He's always looking forward to what's new!

Thank you so much for your time and brilliant storylines over the years!

Most of all, thank you for giving Paul motivation to get through the days!

Yours Faithfully,
Chelsey Wright

NEXT ISSUE:



WORLD BREAKERS!

AVENGERS TITLES ON SALE

AVENGERS #9
THE POWER OF STARBRAND IS UNLEASHED!

AVENGERS #10
IT'S A MISSION INTO CANADA TO RESCUE OMEGA FLIGHT!

AVENGERS ARENA #7
HOW DID ARCADE BECOME ALL-POWERFUL? THE ANSWER IS HERE!

AVENGERS ARENA #8
THE SECRETS OF X-23 AND DARKHAWK COME TO LIGHT!

AVENGERS ASSEMBLE #14AU
AN AGE OF ULTRON TIE-IN! THE BLACK WIDOW FACES THE END OF THE WORLD ON THE WEST COAST!

DARK AVENGERS #189
THE PENULTIMATE CHAPTER OF THE VILLAINS-TURNED-HEROES SAGA!

NEW AVENGERS #5
WHAT IS THE SECRET OF THE MYSTERIOUS BLACK SWAN?

SECRET AVENGERS #3
INTRODUCING THE ALL-NEW, ALL-DIFFERENT IRON PATRIOT! BELIEVE US, IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK!

UNCANNY AVENGERS #7
RAGNAROK NOW! KICKS OFF WITH THE DEATH OF A CELESTIAL AND THE SUCCESSOR TO APOCALYPSE!

YOUNG AVENGERS #4
HAWKEYE AND MARVEL BOY MAKE THE SCENE!

A + X #7
IRON MAN AND THE BEAST! ALSO, THOR TEAMS UP WITH ICEMAN!

ALSO ON SALE!

MARVEL UNIVERSE AVENGERS: EARTH'S MIGHTIEST HEROES #12

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